

REMARKS

The Examiner's action, the objection to claim 8, the rejection of claim 9 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph and the rejection of the remaining claims under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Horimoto have been carefully considered and the application has been amended accordingly. Specifically, claim 8 has been amended to delete the second period and claim 9 has been canceled. The only remaining issue is the rejection of claims 6-10 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Horimoto (U.S. Patent No. 5,857,713). In this connection the Examiner has maintained his original reasons for rejection and has additionally noted, with respect to Attachment A, that the bottom of the slots form a part of the peripheral surface of the cam ring and that the cams of Horimoto project radially from at least the bottom of these slots.

It is abundantly clear from the instant specification and drawings that the cams of the instant application project in a very different manner from the cam ring than the cams of Horimoto. Specifically, the instant cams project radially from the peripheral surface of the cam ring whereas the cams of Horimoto project axially from the peripheral surface of its cam ring (if one does not take into account that the slots technically form a part of the peripheral surface). It is undeniable, it is believed, that the configuration described by the specification and illustrated in the drawings is far superior to the configuration of Horimoto, at least in terms of their respective abilities to connect facing coupling members when the gap between two adjacent cams on a coupling member becomes clogged with dirt (a situation that not infrequently arises due to the manner in which such coupling members are used by emergency responders). Because of the arrangement of the cams in the present invention, recited in currently amended claim 6 as a "cam ring having a plurality of integral cams arranged on the periphery of the cam ring and projecting from the **outermost peripheral surface of the** cam ring in a radial direction," the end faces of the cams on one coupling member facing a respective other coupling member stay free from any part of the other respective coupling member when connected. This means that any dirt stuck in the gap between two neighboring cams is automatically pushed outside of the coupling members when engaging the cams to facilitate connection of the coupling members, and thus the lengths of hose attached thereto.

However, the situation is entirely different in the hose coupling disclosed in Horimoto.

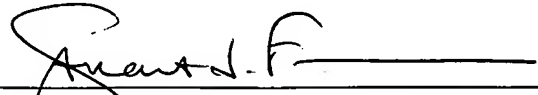
In all embodiments shown in Horimoto, the cams are arranged on the end surface of the cam ring facing the respective other coupling half and do not project radially from the **outermost peripheral surface** of the cam ring. Therefore, any dirt in the gap between two neighboring cams would be pushed against the cam ring and remain in the gap when inserting the cams of the other coupling half, thus rendering insertion of the cams, and coupling of the hoses, impossible. The couplings disclosed in Horimoto must, therefore, be cleaned before the coupling members are coupled to each other. In an emergency situation, where time is of the essence, this takes far too long and is thus not a practical solution for a hose coupling.

The assertion by the Examiner that the bottoms of the slots or recesses in the connector body, such as tool receiving recesses 120, form part of the peripheral surface of the cam ring, whether or not true, does not ascribe to the Horimoto configuration the advantages of the claimed configuration because, in fact, the Horimoto cams do not project radially from the portions of the cam ring which are not recessed. Therefore, the Horimoto coupling does not and cannot function in the advantageous manner described in connection with the claimed connector. Accordingly, the Examiner's reason for rejection, while perhaps meeting the literal language of the former proposed claim 6, did not address the advantages inherent in the claimed configuration. The amendment to claim 6 currently proposed by applicant herein clearly overcomes any literal similarity between claim 6 and Horimoto while highlighting the configurational and functional advantages of the claimed hose coupling. Horimoto no longer anticipates claims 6-10 within the meaning of 35 USC 102(b). At the same time, for the reasons set forth above, Horimoto does not render obvious the cam arrangement of claims 6-10 within the meaning of 35 USC 103.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection under 35 USC 102(b) over Horimoto should be reconsidered and withdrawn in light of the herein proposed amendment to claim 6, and an early notice of allowance issued directed to pending claims 6-8 and 10.

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____


Stuart J. Friedman
Registration No. 24,312

Law Offices of Stuart J. Friedman, P.C.
28930 Ridge Road
Mt. Airy, MD 21771
Telephone: (301) 829-1003
Facsimile: (301) 829-4107